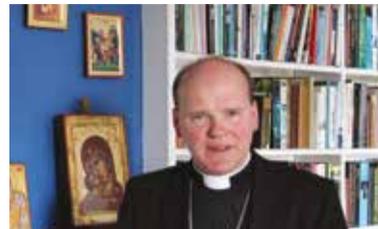


Around the Deaneries: Bicester and Islip



New communities - pages eight and nine



A new era for Ripon College - page 11



God in the life of Gavin - page 16

'Pray and vote,' urges Bishop

THE Acting Bishop of Oxford has urged Christians to vote in the forthcoming General Election and to pray for wisdom for political candidates.

The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher's comments come as churches in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire host hustings, giving people the opportunity to quiz candidates on the issues that matter to them.

Bishop Colin said: "Life in our home in Yarnton is nothing if not interesting politically. When we moved here in 2000 it would have required a major upset for a Conservative Candidate not to be returned as the MP, but a boundary alteration changed all that. We became part of a marginal seat – and the amount of leaflets and letters flooding through our front door bears testimony to that. What will happen on 7 May is still far from decided but it looks as if it will be a close-run thing.

"There is no simplistic Christian manifesto."

"But whether we live in a marginal constituency – or in a so-called safe seat, I hope that all of us will be exercising our democratic right to vote at this election. Like me, you may have become a bit weary of all the promises, and counter-promises – the claims and the counter-claims – but whatever happens in a few days' time will be determined by us.

"There are no simple answers in politics – and there is no simplistic Christian manifesto. All of us have to make up our own minds. All of us who have a vote and should use it. And let us pray for all the candidates seeking to serve us whether as MPs or Councillors, that they will have

the wisdom they need for the difficult decisions those elected will face."

His comments came just days after St Mary's, Witney, in Oxfordshire hosted the only hustings in the UK at which the Prime Minister, David Cameron, answered questions from the public. The event was organised by Churches Together in Witney and chaired by Dave Adams, a Licensed Lay Minister.

Dave said: "It's been a tradition in Witney that churches organise a hustings. We are not trying to run democracy but making a contribution to it. We had people of all ages and the youngest person who asked a question was 16. She is a member of the congregation here. People came along and asked about everything from congestion on the A40 and our local district plan through to issues with the NHS and the ring fencing of education funding."

Meanwhile in Milton Keynes the Bishop of Buckingham, the Rt Revd Alan Wilson, will be at the Citizens:mk Accountability Assembly. Citizens:mk is an alliance of community groups acting together on issues of social justice. The Assembly takes place just one week before the General Election and features the town's parliamentary candidates. It will include music and dance and be Milton Keynes's biggest pre-election meeting. It takes place on Thursday 30 April at Christ the Cornerstone Church, at 6.15pm.

On the website

For a full list of hustings taking place in churches see www.oxford.anglican.org/electionspecial/



From left: Dave Adams (Hustings Chair), Duncan Enright (Labour), Andy Graham (Liberal Democrat), Simon Strutt (UKIP), Stuart McDonald (Green), David Cameron (Conservative). Photograph: Mark Hemsworth/Churches Together in Witney.

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Church honours lay people for distinguished service

by Sarah Meyrick

FIVE lay people who have served the Diocese of Oxford and the community at large are to be honoured. They will be admitted into the Order of St Frideswide at a special service at the Cathedral in Oxford later this year.

The new members are Mary Bayliss from Swallowfield in Berkshire; Peter Bridges from Oxford; Jo Saunders from Burnham in Buckinghamshire; Robin Birch from Oxford; and Geoff Strutt from Steeple Claydon in Buckinghamshire.

The Order of St Frideswide – named after the patron saint of the City of Oxford – was founded in 2001 by the then Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Richard Harries, as a way of giving recognition to lay people who have given outstanding service to the Church over many years.

The new members will be admitted to the Order at a special service of Holy Communion at Christ Church Cathedral on Thursday 22 October 2015.

The Acting Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, said: “I am delighted that we are able to announce today the names of these five new members of the Order of St Frideswide. Each in their own way has made a distinguished contribution to the life of the diocese and it will be good to recognise that in our Cathedral later this year. We also look forward to continuing to work with them long into the future alongside the other 15 members of the Order.”

Lottery funding for Chalgrove



ST MARY'S Church, Chalgrove in south Oxfordshire, has received a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant of £544,900.

The project aims to clean and conserve the nationally important cycle of medieval wall paintings, and refurbish the interior of the church. The work starts in June and the church will re-open in time for Easter next year. Work will be carried out on internal stonework, walls will be replastered and decorated, and new lighting, heating and sound systems will be installed.

The south entrance porch will be improved and the gathering space at the back of the church expanded. Integral to the project will be new ways of describing the history and heritage of the church to visitors. Volunteer guides will be trained and new electronic and printed information produced by the local history group, children at the primary school and others.

A group of photographers are recording the inside of the building before, during and after the project to provide an archive of visual information for future researchers.

The chancel paintings are unique in being a complete

scheme covering three walls and date from the reign of King Edward II, 1307 to 1327. They were probably paid for by the De Barentin family, whose brass memorials can also be seen in the chancel.

The church hosts art exhibitions, banquets, concerts and other musical events, as well as worship and life events. It was built in the 12th century and houses a ring of six bells in the tower, which were completely refurbished in 2012.

The vicar, the Revd Canon Ian Cohen said: “We are very encouraged that the HLF Trustees are keen to see us complete our important works and will be contributing 56 per cent of the cost. With their support now, built on their mentoring up to this stage of the project, we should be able to deliver our plans in a way that ends in success for everyone.

“The glory of Chalgrove Church is that it is a country church, which has always sought to serve this village and neighbourhood. In the future, with the enthusiasm generated by HLF support, its heritage can be shared and valued so much more widely.”

Carry on ringing thanks to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund

A FUND that has provided more than £440,000 in grants for bell restoration projects at 188 churches has celebrated its 40th anniversary.

Now with a market value of £467,000, the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund was the brainchild of Henry Lawrenson, a ringer in Newbury. In the early 1970s he assessed the total cost of bell repair work in the Diocese to be £10,000 per year. From there Henry and others came up with a proper business and investment plan for the fund. Businesses were approached for donations and sponsored peals and other ringing events were held. Branches of ringers were encouraged to join in fundraising. The East Berks and North Bucks Branch launched a business selling stationery, clothing, confectionery, glassware and other bell-themed items.

In September 1976 the first grant of £200 was donated to St Mary and All Saints, Beaconsfield. Since then 208 bell restoration projects have been given grants. The biggest so far was £21,000 to All Saints High Wycombe in 2012 for work including new bells, a frame and significant tower works.

This is an edited version of an article from The Ringing World, written by Alan Marchbank.

Bells chime again in Marsworth

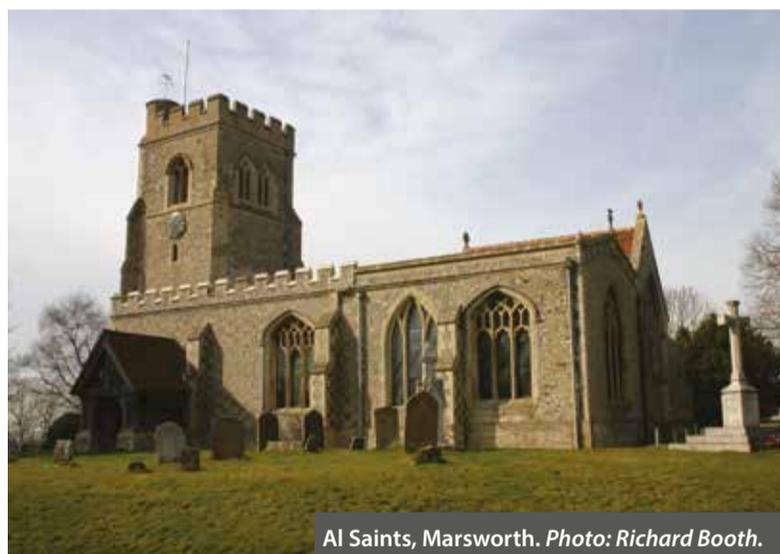
ALL Saints Church in Marsworth, Buckinghamshire, was struggling to find enough ringers.

Even when they joined forces with the team at nearby Cheddington, they still did not always have enough people. Realising something had to be done the ringing team held open tower events, giving newbies the opportunity to try their hand at ringing, but that generated little interest.

In June 2013 three ringers from Marsworth and one from Cheddington enrolled on a day course to learn how to teach bell handling with the Association of Ringing Teachers. “Without knowing how effective it would be, we advertised another ‘tower open evening’, with a poster campaign, leaflets, article in the local paper and adverts on social media,” said Richard Booth, Tower Captain.

“This time we were much more organised - with a team of ringers ready to demonstrate ringing, answer questions and let people ‘have a go’ under supervision. Overall, 11 people turned up, and the idea of a structured approach to gradual learning with trained teachers was obviously far more attractive than the usual advice to ‘turn up on a practice night’, with several people booking in for handling lessons starting the next week.”

“As people ring and learn together, they naturally progress and a real team spirit has developed. To date, we have



All Saints, Marsworth. Photo: Richard Booth.

run several similar recruitment evenings and have taught over 20 people to learn to ring, not just from Marsworth but from surrounding villages.

“Training so many new ringers has involved a lot of commitment but has been very rewarding - we run two dedicated practices each week for the new group, in addition to our general practice, just to cope with demand and give the newer ringers more time to develop skills at their specific level.”

All Saints has bought a simulator, a computer based system that allows the bells to be silenced outside and just heard within the tower, enabling ringers to practise regularly without disturbing the

neighbours.

Marsworth received grants for the work from the Ringing Foundation and the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers.

Richard added: “The future of bell ringing at Marsworth now looks much more optimistic, and as all our regular practices have brought many people into the Church, the ringing has become a real focal point for the parish.”

On the website

For more see www.ringingteachers.co.uk and www.odg.org.uk/bellfund

Internet and social media training

ARE you and your church using the internet and social media? Would you like to learn more about creating and making the most of your own website, or using social media to connect with the outside world and/or to communicate internally?

The Communications Team at the Diocese of Oxford will be running an Internet and Social Media training day on Monday 1 June. The event is designed for everyone from those who know very little about cyberspace through to people who regularly use websites and social media but would like to learn more.

The event will run from 10am

to 4pm at Diocesan Church House. It is free but participants should bring a packed lunch.

For more information or to sign up contact Phil Hind on philip.hind@oxford.anglican.org or Jo Duckles on jo.duckles@oxford.anglican.org or call 01865 208227.



£2.7 million Jubilee Building opens



The annexe during its grand opening. Photo: Simon Beaumont/MEB Design.

A TWO-storey annexe has opened at St Andrew's Church, Linton Road, Oxford.

The Jubilee Building was opened by the former Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd John Pritchard. The building includes two new offices and will be a resource for the community and be used to develop St Andrew's already thriving children's and youth work. It includes a specially designated café area for young people to hang out in a safe environment. The £2.7 million needed to construct and equip the building has been largely raised by the congregation.

Reading Minster offers Sanctuary to clubbers

SANCTUARY at the Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin is offering Reading's pub and club-goers refuge, recovery and refreshment in the midst of the town's hectic night scene.

With a name that could almost be the chill-out zone of a night club, *Sanctuary* is being piloted at the Minster between 10.00pm on Saturday nights and 2.00am on Sunday mornings. The initiative is run by volunteers from the church in partnership with the Reading Street Pastors. The Revd Stephen Pullin, the Rector of the Minster, said: "Some of our visitors come into the candlelit Minster looking for a contemplative space or simply out of curiosity; they can relax on the bean bags listening to a mixture of club soundtracks, monastic chanting and other contemporary music, or watch the films projected high up on the walls.

"Others take the opportunity to pray or seek out a pastoral or spiritual conversation."



Not all the Minster's visitors are having a great night out. The Street Pastors might bring in the 'emotionally wounded' or people who have over-imbibed and whose greatest need is a coffee, a piece of toast or a bucket. It's not always a pretty sight but it's a safe place for young people to be until their parents can pick them up or a taxi home can be arranged.

Stephen added: "On our busiest night we've had 150 visitors,

the great majority of whom are unchurched people.

"We're offering practical help and a physical space but the themes of refuge, recovery and refreshment also work on a spiritual level. Contemporary club culture includes a search for transcendence and transformation. At the Minster we're offering people the opportunity to come in and experience the real thing."

Government funding for roof repairs

THE Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced the first round of historic UK places of worship to benefit from the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair fund.

A total of 502 places of worship will receive between £10,000 to £100,000 to meet the costs of urgent repairs to roofs and rainwater disposal. Money is also being provided for structural investigations; specialist reports and bat surveys.

The successful applicants in the

Diocese of Oxford were:

Berkshire: Parish of Welford with St Swithun's Church, Wickham £85,400; All Saints Church, Wokingham, £19,800; St Michael and All Angels, Lambourn £25,500; St Margaret, Mapledurham; £13,200.

Buckinghamshire: St Mary's Church, Shenley Church End £51,700; St Mary the Virgin, Padbury, £50,200; St John the Baptist, Little Missenden, Amersham; £71,200, St. Mary's

Church, North Marston, £67,200.

Oxfordshire: St Mary's Church, Black Bourton, £20,500; St Mary's Church, Childrey, Wantage £26,600; St Swithun's Church, Merton, £99,200; St Mary's Banbury, £100,000; St Nicholas Church, Britwell Salome, £43,200; St John the Baptist Church, Stanton St John, £28,800; St Denys' Church, Northmoor £36,700.

See www.lpowroof.org.uk/ for the complete national list.

Leafield's cultural exchange

MORRIS dancing, a trip to the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers Museums and Christ Church Cathedral were all part of a visit made to Leafield CE Primary School by the Comenius Project.

Teachers from Bulgaria, Italy, Spain and Turkey visited the school as part of the lifelong learning scheme that seeks to develop knowledge and understanding among young people and education staff across Europe.

During the week, visiting teachers spent time at school learning about education in the UK. They enjoyed performances by Leafield children and explored Blenheim Palace, the Cotswolds and London. The project culminates in June when staff from Leafield visit Bulgaria.

Jonnie hears stories of hope in the run-up to Christian Aid Week

OXFORD'S Christian Aid intern Jonnie Walker met women like Loko, who have to walk miles every day to pick up firewood, on a recent trip to Ethiopia.

Loko says: "If I can't collect firewood, my children will die." Loko makes a gruelling eight-hour trip, four times a week to gather wood, praying to God asking him to change her life.

But Jonnie also heard stories of change and optimism thanks to support from Christian Aid partner HUNDEE.

HUNDEE works with the community to identify the poorest of the poor. These are often women who have no support, nor any livestock to generate income, yet have to provide for their children.

Jonnie met a woman called Adi Abdura, who had been in the same situation as Loko. Jonnie says: "Through our partners' work, Adi received a cow and two goats. These livestock produce milk for her children, provide an income through selling butter and importantly, as assets, they

give Adi greater status within the community. She is respected and valued within her community."

Through workshops run by HUNDEE a dialogue has begun between men and women about steps they could take towards a fairer society. With Adi's voice, amongst other women's now being heard, laws are being passed that will benefit women throughout the community.

Child marriage, excessive drinking and traditional harmful practices such as FGM have been banned, meaning that some of the longstanding problems that have adversely affected women will not affect the future generations. Adi also joined a self-help group where she learns literacy skills and about the importance of saving. The group loans money to members so that they can start up businesses and through this Adi now trades sugar and tea within her village. She has even built her own shop. Her life has really improved. Yet there are still many women who do not yet have this story to tell.

Loko says: "My hope for the future and for my children rests in God. I work day and night and I pray to Him that my children will have good, successful lives."

From 10-16 May, churches the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland will come together to pray, campaign and raise money to improve the lives of people like Loko.

Thinking ahead to Christian Aid Week, Jonnie said: "For me it was just incredible to see the work of our partners in Ethiopia and to hear stories of tangible change and genuine hope for the future.

"I want to encourage everyone to get involved in Christian Aid week in whatever way they can, whether this is praying for Christian Aid's work or helping raise money to fund our amazing partners around the world."

On the website
For more information visit
www.caweek.org



Jonnie Walker with Bokiya Gooloo on a recent trip to Ethiopia with Christian Aid. Photo: Andrew Weston.

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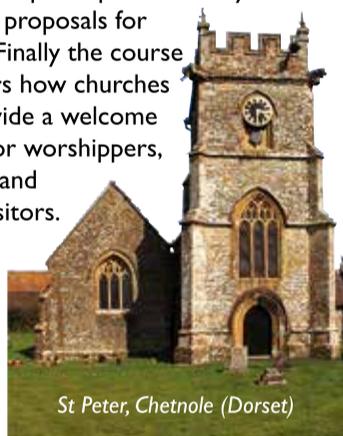


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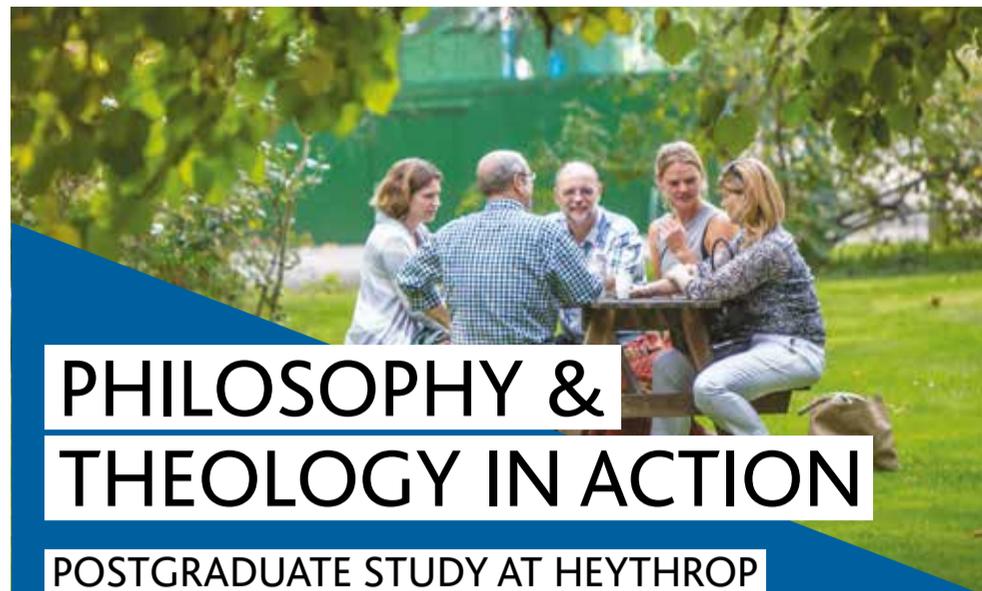
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- Britten and the English String Quartet 6 June
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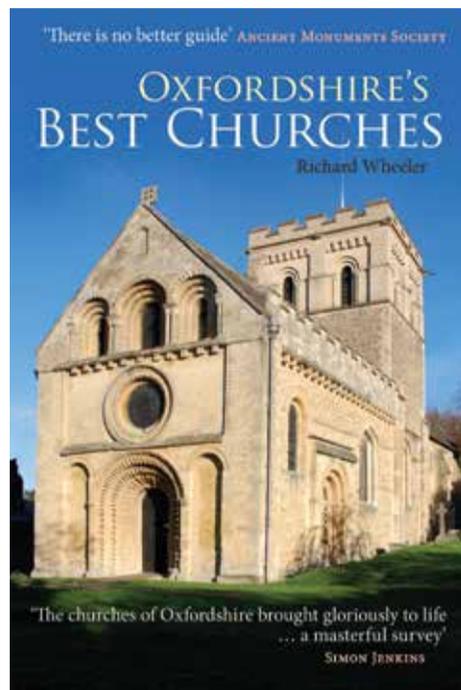
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The churches are richly illustrated with 340 colour photographs and numerous plans, and accompanied by a wide-ranging introduction and a comprehensive glossary, making this the ideal companion for those exploring the churches of Oxfordshire. Simon Jenkins, the journalist and author of *England's Thousand Best Churches*, has endorsed the book, stating: "The churches of Oxfordshire brought gloriously to life... a masterful survey."

The Door has three copies of the book, worth £15.99 each to give away. For the chance to win simply send your name and address to *Oxfordshire's Best Churches* competition, *the Door*, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey Lane, Oxford, OX2 0NB. The closing date for entries is Friday, 8 May.



Paradoxology

Krish Kandiah
Hodder and Stoughton
£9.99

by Graham Sykes

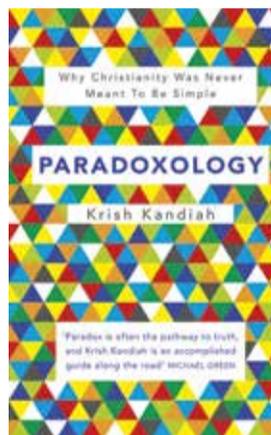
I recall, soon after my own conversion to Christ, my colleagues at work dismissing the Bible, which none had read in any detail, as self-contradictory and inconsistent. I come very much from a theological tradition that starts with scripture. My reading of scripture has been deeply influenced by early evangelistic conversations. A shallow reading of scripture may lead to the conclusions my friends articulated. However I have wrestled with many of the difficulties of the paradoxical nature of scripture – paradox being subtly different from contradiction. I have always been wary of trite interpretations of scripture that force answers that patently are not there.

I was naturally attracted to Krish Kandiah's book *Paradoxology* because of its title and, having read other books by him notably *Home for Good*, I wondered what he had to say on this thorny subject. I confess I feared it might just end up being the standard fudge approach to these genuine difficulties with the Bible, however I was pleasantly surprised as he systemically analyses some of the most challenging Biblical paradoxes.

"...in the end God's sovereignty rings out loud and clear."

He deals with the immolation of Isaac; Moses's experience of both of the immanence and transcendence of God; Joshua's experience of the patience of God, the enormity of the compassion of God but also the gravity of judgement of God in the brutality of the Canaanite conquest; Job's experience of the paradox of pain and suffering (there was a man faced with trite interpretations of scripture!); the pain of Hosea living out the message

of faithfulness and the damage of adultery; Habakkuk wrestling with the paradox of a God who is painfully unpredictable; Jonah who is simultaneously the best and the worst prophet in Israelite history; the strange story of the orphan, Esther, facing sexual exploitation, personal vendettas and the threat of anti-Semitic ethnic cleansing in a book where nobody explicitly prays.



"...wrestling with paradoxes works itself out into praise..."

God is in on mute yet in the end God's sovereignty rings out loud and clear. The first 200 or so pages are taken up with the complex Old Testament paradoxes with just 100 for the New Testament paradoxes of Jesus who is both divine and human; of Judas and the issue of our freewill; the cross where the God who loses is the winner that takes it all; the paradox of St Paul's life expressed in his theological wrestling in his letter to the Romans and finally the paradoxes of the Corinthian Church.

This book is shot through with excellent theological reflection and wrestling with truly difficult questions of life. It is amply illustrated with contemporary story and examples of how this wrestling with paradoxes works itself out into praise - hence the title *Paradoxology*. I commend it to the thoughtful who love scripture and want to address the genuine challenging issues of the Bible and I commend it to preachers as a rich mine of thought, useful in the preparation of sermons.

The Revd Graham Sykes is the Chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford and Chair of the Door's Editorial Support Group.

An artistic call to risky living

BRENDAN the Navigator's story has fascinated and inspired countless generations since the monk first set off from Ireland with a group of his friends in the Sixth Century in search of the Promised Land.

The St Agnes' Fountain Community Choir are being joined by singers, musicians, dancers, artists and craftspeople from across the area – including the Halcyon String Quartet from the Royal Academy of Music, Windsor Community Orchestra, the St Agnes' Fountain Children's Choir and Ananya Danz – to take part in a presentation of work around the song cycle *Brendan the Navigator - A Call to Risky Living*.

The work will be performed on St Brendan's Day, Saturday 16 May 2015, at 2pm at St John the Baptist Church, Windsor. The service will be followed by an opportunity to view a themed art and craft exhibition over refreshments.

The work was written for the choir by its musical director, Sue Morgan, using



words written by Andy Raine of the Northumbria Community and the choir are delighted that Andy will be joining them for the event.

A collection will be held to further the work of the St Agnes' Fountain Music and Faith Centre which was established in 2009 with the aim of providing the local community with a valuable performance space and teaching facility and also offers musical support for the worship at St Andrew's Clewer and All Saints Dedworth.

See www.stagnesfountain.org for more.

Seasons of my Soul
Methodist Publishing
£8.99

by Felicity Blair

About to hit my 60th birthday and therefore giving much thought to the second half of life, I was asked to review this very helpful and interesting work book produced by the Methodist Church.

This is an excellent resource for us older people and I hope that it will be widely used in churches across the country. I am struck by how little we use and enquire of the experience and resources that older people bring to our congregations and communities. We tend to concentrate our energies on "bringing in the youngsters" which is, of course, important but very often we do so at the price of ignoring the conversations that we older people want and need.

"...a most valuable resource to churches, home groups, Lent and Advent groups..."

This book is an excellent resource for those conversations. It sets out clearly eight important themes for discussion and reflection. Those themes are identity, memories, transition times, wisdom, roles and relationships, forgiveness and reconciliation, death and dying and the celebration of life.

The authors give instructive and helpful guidelines as to how to plan and structure a group discussion whether over

two hours, four hours or a whole day. They recommend taking one of the eight themes and also give direction on how the group would like to address that theme by discussion, Bible connections, creative activities or social action topics.

The prayers that are suggested are beautiful and wholly appropriate and the instructions for each themed session have been carefully thought out and are well prepared as are the chosen Bible passages.

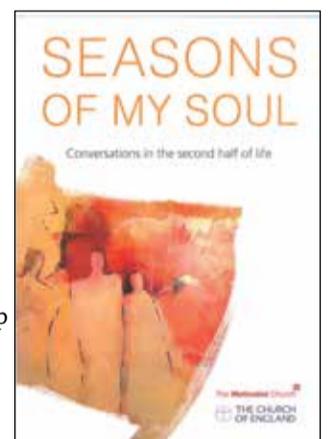
I very much enjoyed reading this work book, it has been written with much care and thought. It is a most valuable resource to churches, home groups, Lent and Advent groups, quiet days etc. I highly recommend that it is used in every church and I shall definitely be using it in mine, here in Oxford.

I leave you with it's opening prayer:

*Deep within your heart
There is a dwelling place
Where gifts are nurtured
And wounds are healed
Spend time there
Sit in peace
Refresh your soul in God's presence.*

Copyright: Methodist Publishing.

Felicity Blair is a member of the Oxford Diocese's Spiritual Care of Older People (SCOP) network.



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Around the Deaneries - Bicester and Islip

THE Bicester and Islip Deanery is in a period of transition as thousands of new homes are built.

Driving through the former RAF base at Upper Heyford, I noted the mix of old industrial and military units, former military housing and the brand new properties and construction sites where new houses will soon stand. Older buildings have been recycled for new uses, with the new Heyford Park Free School using the former Officers' Mess as its base. Others are being demolished to make way for the new developments.

The deanery is a mix of tiny, more isolated villages with populations of just 150 people, larger ones with up to 500 and the larger town of Bicester, with its huge retail outlet. The Revd Stephen Griffiths (pictured right), became Team Rector of the Cherwell Valley Benefice in October 2013 and took over as Area Dean in September 2014. Stephen is married to Cally and when we met, the couple were expecting a baby imminently. Stephen showed me around the chapel offices and the surrounding area.

Vital statistics:

Area Dean: Stephen Griffiths
Lay Chair: Michael Dockrey
Clergy: 14
Churches: 39
Benefices: 6

Recently the Revd Geoff Price was appointed Team Vicar, and together with Stephen and Barbara, the administrator, they work to support the benefice as well as the wider deanery. "The strength of this benefice really is the collaboration between the churchwardens and volunteers. The lay involvement is crucial," says Stephen.

At the Upper Heyford Chapel, a 1950s building with a large meeting room and various offices, various community groups not linked to the church use the facilities. "There are groups all over the deanery using churches and they are links to the community we would not want to lose," said Stephen. The chapel itself is a base for the Clean Slate, a charity that empowers, builds self-esteem and develops the talking and coping skills of those who have been victims of sexual, physical, mental and emotional abuse.

"We are taking the population growth very seriously, looking at job descriptions and clergy deployment across all of the benefices and beginning to see the deanery as one unit, rather than five separate benefices," says Stephen. "We have chapter breakfasts and social activities for clergy to begin to draw us together for what could be a more collaborative style of working. We are recognising some parishes are experiencing population growth and can't carry on with their current system



of organisation and we are learning to be a resource for one another.

"That leads us to think about church planting and how we begin to work in brand new communities. We are trying to be pro-active while not putting all of our eggs in one basket. We have our day-to-day work of schools and home visits, PCC meetings and church social activities. The traditional ministry has to be balanced with the needs of the new communities and that really sets the agenda for the Deanery Synod."

Stephen stressed the importance of communicating with parishes and listening to concerns about changing communities. "We need awareness of the issues at every level and we need to ensure that everything discussed at every level is communicated."



Stephen has been working closely with Diocesan Director of Glebe and Buildings, David Mason and the New Communities Officer, Peter Morgan, over longer term plans.

For more on how the diocese is responding to new communities, including Bicester's Garden City, see pages eight and nine.

Shelswell Family Ministry

"ONLY last week I stood in the car park at one of our schools and prayed with one of the mums who was seeking God for some guidance," says Mandy Bentley, who runs the Shelswell Family Ministry.

"Giving our time and showing Jesus's love to others cannot be underestimated," says Mandy, whose work has seen her set up a series of groups in her Benefice as well as visiting a pre-school twice a month with a Bible story.

Funday School is an after school club at Finmere school. This includes crafts,

worship and a Bible story. Another Funday School is set to open in Fringford.

Mandy and her team have also run a couple of Messy Churches and have a regular Five Minutes' Peace parents' Bible study, for mums with toddlers.

Mandy added: "The main aim of the groups is to build meaningful relationships with both children and adults. It is from these relationships that conversations develop around life in general but also around the bigger and deeper questions in life."



Mandy tells a Bible story in a child-friendly way.

Dr South's new creative space

THE Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, the Bishop of Dorchester, visited Dr South's Primary School in Islip, Oxfordshire to bless the new Lin Cooper Practical Skills Building.

The creative hub was built in memory of a former pupil who died in 2012. Lin grew up in Islip and attended the school in the 1950s, and particularly enjoyed the many practical activities such as cookery, needlework and art. The new space, designed by architect Tim Howard and built by Sean Constable, has been created to be as flexible as possible. It has a kitchen, art area, drama space and music room, all of which can be sectioned off with sliding walls to make sound-proof areas, although the whole building can be opened out for large groups. Headteacher Huw Morgan said, "We are privileged to have such a flexible building which enables small groups of children to be doing a wide range of activities at the same time. The children are particularly enjoying having time to focus on cooking skills in the carefully designed kitchen with child sized worktops."

If you would like to see the building contact the school office on 01865 372323.

Pupils pose in front of a photograph of Lin Cooper in the 1950s. Picture: Huw Morgan.



Sharing the love at school

by Jane Hemmings

COUNTRY parishes have few children attending on a Sunday, but often have church schools at which church representatives are welcome to take assemblies. This is the case in the Akeman Benefice. With seven churches and three church schools it seemed impossible to offer a weekly assembly at each school on my own so I built an assembly team from the church of both lay and ordained people. We encouraged each school to hold regular services for Harvest, Christmas, Easter and summer leavers. One school already had this pattern and the others have now joined.

It wasn't always obvious what we could do for our schools and we were aware of pressures that both pupils and staff were under so we started a prayer group and a prayer box scheme. We put a box and prayer cards in every school for the children to fill in knowing that their prayers would be prayed at the monthly

schools prayer group. From this came the idea of starting a prayer group for the children at one of our schools. We did so tentatively but it was enthusiastically welcomed by children who were happy to give up some of their lunch hour every couple of weeks to pray. Many of the children who come have no involvement in church. This school has also recently held a very successful Prayer Spaces week.

In the run-up to Easter we encouraged children to do something positive for Lent with a leaflet we produced encouraging them to do something to help the environment, their families, their neighbours and our world.

We are not always successful at encouraging our children to join us on Sundays but we are able to take the church to them in school and share the love of Jesus with them where they are.

The Revd Jane Hemmings is the Rector of the Akeman Benefice.

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WHEN you pick up the keys to your brand new home, the sound of diggers and cement mixers can be heard as the houses that your new neighbours will eventually move into are still under construction. That's the scenario for thousands of people moving to new estates across the diocese. *The Door* explores how the Church is responding to the growth of new communities.

By Peter Morgan

With the General Election looming, one area where there is consensus between all three major parties is the need to address the "housing crisis".

During this election campaign the Government will claim that house building, during its administration, is recovering from the financial crash of 2008/9 and that under their direction, more affordable housing has been built than under the previous administration. These claims are allied with the recent announcement

by the top ten house builders that their profits have surged by an eye-watering 34 per cent, and have almost returned to pre-crash levels.

Such crowing is in stark contrast to one report commissioned by the homeless charity Shelter in which they claim the industry is building 100,000 fewer homes per year than is needed to remedy the housing shortage. So on this issue the battle lines are being drawn and manifesto pledges put into overdrive – the Conservative Party say they will build 200,000 new homes for first time buyers, the Labour party have pledged 200,000 a year - the Liberal Democrats a staggering 300,000 a year by 2020.

Given the past performance of successive Governments on this issue, we could treat these claims with some scepticism. However, one thing is certain – delivering new housing and, more specifically affordable housing is set to be a major concern for the next Government. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market



Assessment (SHMA) 2014, concluded that Oxfordshire alone would need to build up to 100,000 new homes by 2031 to meet anticipated demand. Whilst this of course takes account of the existing pipeline to 2026, this number is still eye-wateringly high.

"Oxfordshire alone would need to build up to 100,000 new homes..."

Local councils are trying to find available/deliverable sites to meet this demand and are updating their Local Plans to ensure new development can be delivered in a managed way. New housing is an urgent challenge for our local authorities, as new communities which will inhabit these places are an urgent challenge for the diocese. Given the election promises made by the major parties, this sense of urgency is set to continue for some time to come.

Peter Morgan is the New Communities Officer for the Diocese of Oxford. This edition of the Door was put together in the run-up to the 2015 UK General Election.

Continued growth in Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes as a 'New Town' came into existence in the late 1960s and is still expanding with new building going on all the time. The Revd John Robertson, the Director of Ecumenical Mission, chairs the New Communities group in the area.

"We have building going on constantly. We have a meeting with the council looking forward to the next 25 years and how far the boundary will extend," says John. Currently there are 13,000 new houses planned, a figure that looks set to increase.

In the east 'A Church Without Walls' is a developing Christian community headed up by the United Reformed Church minister, the Revd Ruth Maxey, to serve the

Broughton and Brooklands area. Her house is provided by the Diocese of Oxford in an ecumenical project. There are already 2,800 relatively new homes with another 3,000 set to be built.

"That's a good example of shared work," said John. "Ruth has started the work from scratch largely by developing networks and contacts through wider community work. There is now a solid core of involvement with a wide variety of people engaging with 'Café Church', 'Dinner Church' and now 'Forest Church'.

Another Fresh Expression is St Mark's, a community of people mainly in their 20s and 30s and run by the Revd Paul Oxley. See www.stmarksmk.com for more.

John added that construction to the west of the town is well under way with some 6,000 houses planned.

He said: "Here, among other things we are looking at the possibility of the diocese expanding its schools' provision to serve the community as it grows."

On the website

For more see www.oxford.anglican.org/aroundthedeaneries-milton-keynes/ and www.mkchurchwithoutwalls.org.uk/

Helping Warfield thrive

By Mark Griffiths

The process began for Warfield Church in Berkshire in the autumn of 2012 when we began to grasp how 2,200 new homes and 7,000 new people would see the shape of the parish change forever.

The church needs to be heard and heard very early on in the process. Churches may be the largest provider of youth and children's ministry in the area, the largest provider of activities for older generations, be the most engaged in their schools and hold a huge volunteer force.

We understand our communities and recognise what will make them thrive. For Warfield, we knew that many of the new homes would be filled with young families; we didn't want to see them cut off. In January 2013 we invited the Bracknell Forest head of planning to talk to us. We invited Peter Morgan, from the Diocesan New Communities Group to come too. He is an expert in planning and development. The diocese have provided us with an exceptional resource in Peter.

The initial plans contained two primary

schools and a community centre. And so we began with one of the schools. I was already a governor at the one-form entry Church of England school, so an initial discussion with the chair of governors and headteacher soon revealed that we would be up for moving to a larger school. We then asked the head of the Local Education Authority to visit us at the church office and we discussed the possibilities. It was clear that he didn't want to lose the existing school, but it is was also clear that a new CofE school would mean that new houses would sell like hotcakes. Discussion soon led to a plan to keep the existing school and add another two-form entry church school, under the leadership of the same head and governors. The new school will open in September 2016.

When it came to the community centre we began to present a vision for something that Warfield could be proud of, inspired by the Finchampstead Baptist Centre.

Eventually we took everyone involved to Finchampstead where we laid on a buffet and invited councillors to come and talk to us about how a partnership with the

church could result in such superb facilities.

The result was that plans for the Warfield Community Hub are being drawn up. The church has offered extra finance to expand this project, along with vision, energy and capable people. This is all still being worked out and Warfield Church has encouraged people to stand for the parish and borough councils so that we can influence the infrastructure.

There's still a way to go and some more areas to engage with. But here's my quick summary:

1. Engage early
2. Bring in diocesan support – New Communities Officer
3. Recognise your significance – your community needs you
4. Know what you want to achieve
5. Run at it. And when it looks like it's not going to happen, run at it some more!

Revd Dr Mark Griffiths, Vicar of Warfield Church and part of the Diocesan New Communities Committee, presents a Vision for Community Engagement and Development.

A Garden City

by Ian Biscoe

THE Government recently announced that Bicester is to become a garden city. This will mean up to 13,000 new homes being built in Bicester, doubling the population of the current town. The development is broken down into three key areas of Bicester, Kingsmere, Eco Town and Graven Hill. Working in collaboration with the other churches in Bicester we are trying to respond to this rapid growth. Within the Bicester and Islip Deanery we also have a further 1,500 houses in development at Heyford Park. **(See page seven for more on the Bicester and Islip Deanery.)**

New housing development brings huge challenges for the local church but also huge opportunities.

We are fortunate to have a Church Army evangelist, John Bentley, who is working with St Edburg's Church and a group from the Bicester Baptist Church reaching out onto the Kingsmere estate. They deliver a home baked cake and welcome pack to every new resident.

Emmanuel Church Bicester is exploring ideas for church planting on the Eco town. This includes a new monastic community, church families moving into the new homes and a possible new place of worship.

Caversfield St. Lawrence are working at



Children plant flower beds at the site of the new St Edburg's School on the developing Kingsmere estate. Photo: Dave Fleming

developing and improving their church building so it can be used for both worship and community ministry within Caversfield and the Eco Town.

On the Graven Hill development Bicester Baptist Church are pursuing ideas for a place of worship and there is an imaginative idea for a centre for training and supporting young people.

We are planning a conference on 6 June 2015 to inform and equip Christians across Bicester and the surrounding area about potential ways to respond to new housing developments. Our speakers will present research on

church planting, give us an update on the latest developments in our area and look at our spiritual response to growth.

The workshops will focus on four local areas and provide an opening to share experiences and network across denominations. This conference creates the opportunity to work together in finding ways to grow God's kingdom in and around our garden city.

Book through the Eventbrite link at <http://tinyurl.com/occb96c>.

The Revd Ian Biscoe is the Team Vicar of the Bicester with Bucknell, Caversfield and Launton Benefice.

Aylesbury Vale - A great place to grow

by Andrew Blyth

The landscape around Aylesbury and its surrounding villages is changing fast. Churches across our deanery are having to respond to enormous challenges and mission opportunities being created by a string of housing developments. We already have 5,000 new homes built or in advanced preparation and many more have been proposed. One recent estimate suggests that up to 35,000 homes may eventually be created in the Aylesbury Vale area over the next 18 years.

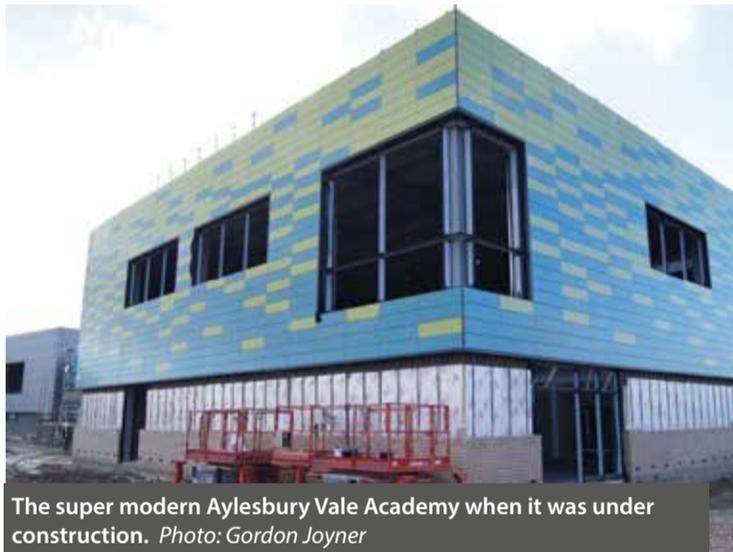
As Area Dean I'm frankly grateful that the scale of the building means it is obvious that 'business as usual' is just not going to be an option. Whether we are looking at the needs of an entirely new community of several thousand people or the impact of several hundred homes developed alongside an existing village community, we know that we have to think creatively about different ways of growing and expressing church witness and life.

So far the clear theme in our mission planning is the need for a 'mixed economy' of different styles of partnership working. On the Buckingham Park development a group drawn from long-standing ecumenical partners has enabled local churches to forge links into the new community through the tried and tested path of founding a parent and toddler group and active involvement in the primary school.

With the Berryfields development to the north of Aylesbury, we found we needed to forge a new style of partnership with the Aylesbury Vale Academy school which led to the appointment of the Revd Gareth

Lane to serve in a jointly funded role as Pioneer Vicar in the community and Chaplain to the school.

Looking forward to the start of work on the major Broughton Crossing development, we have two adjacent parishes with very different traditions and styles committed to working together on an informal 'covenant' basis to combine their strengths. With so much population growth there are of course going to be major challenges for our deanery, not least around personnel and financial resources; however, we share an optimism that God will use these as much for the renewal of



The super modern Aylesbury Vale Academy when it was under construction. Photo: Gordon Joyner

the 'old' as for the 'new'. We can't help noticing that the strapline on the bottom of the signs informing people that they are entering the Aylesbury Vale District reads 'A great place to grow'!

The Revd Canon Andrew Blyth is the Area Dean of Aylesbury.

Building capacity

YOU are invited to attend one of the forums in the *Building Capacity - New Communities Forums* events set to take place during September 2015. The forums will be chaired by the Ven. Martin Gorick, the Archdeacon of Oxford, and the aim is to share experiences, stories and good practice with all who are seeking to respond to the challenges arising from large scale development. The forums take place on:

- Tuesday 22 September, Emmanuel Church Bicester
- Saturday 26 September, Aylesbury Vale Academy School
- Wednesday 30 September, St James Church, Finchampstead.

The doors for each event open at 9.30am for tea and coffee. The forums will finish at 12.30pm. To sign up email Peter Morgan, the Diocesan New Communities Officer on peter.morgan@oxford.anglican.org.



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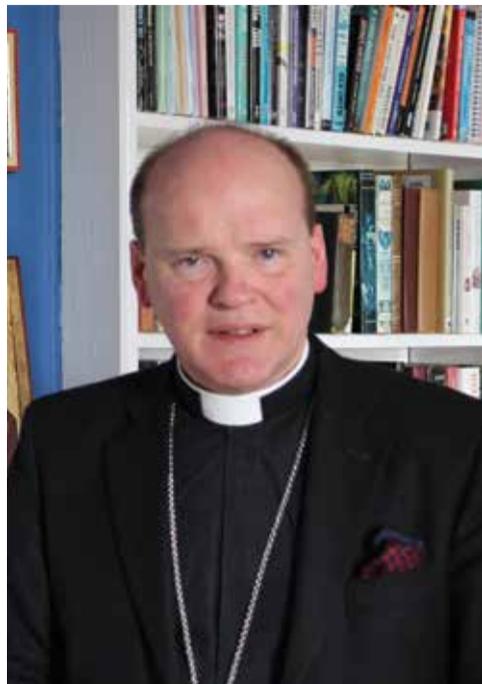
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A new era for Cuddesdon

New Principal Humphrey Southern talks to Sarah Meyrick



ordinations. Cuddesdon has a long and distinguished history as a theological college – it lays claim to having trained a third of current bishops, deans and archdeacons in the Church of England – and is the largest provider of ordination training in the UK. There are currently over 150 students training for ordained ministry, and a growing number preparing for LLM, Pioneer and other lay ministries.

“It’s a time when our core business is up for grabs,” says Bishop Humphrey. “But there’s nothing in that report that frightens us. We already provide a range of different training pathways. That’s one of our strengths. We have students in a residential and non-residential mould, and we have a close engagement with Oxford University.

“...nothing but a church full of vibrancy, excitement and danger...”

Ripon College, Cuddesdon, entered a new era last month with the arrival of its new Principal, the Rt Revd Humphrey Southern. Bishop Humphrey, who was until recently Bishop of Repton in the Diocese of Derby, takes up office after the departure of the Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy who was installed as Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, in October.

Bishop Humphrey was a student at Cuddesdon himself in the 1980s, and professes himself mildly surprised to be back after 30 years. “I’ve never moved back anywhere,” he says. “Someone suggested to me the other day that it was all ‘chaps in tweed coats with pipes’ when I was here. That’s not quite right, but certainly there are changes. Cuddesdon today is a place of parity between genders in a way that seems quite relaxed. There’s real inclusion: people are seriously received and welcomed for who they are, as created by God, and I’m excited by that.”

It’s also time of great challenge and change in theological education. A recent report from the Archbishop’s Council, *Resourcing Ministerial Education*, has raised a number of questions about the future of ordination training, and, specifically, has called for a 50 per cent increase in

“But if that 50 per cent figure is realistic, the Holy Spirit will call people from an even broader diversity. The core of what we offer isn’t different: it’s about that shared journey into understanding who we are before God. Each of us makes that as an individual, but in community. As you walk along that journey, which is frightening, puzzling, uncomfortable, and full of joy, you encounter the people who walk alongside you, and there’s a richness.”

So what of Bishop Humphrey’s own journey to ordination? After reading History at Christ Church College, Oxford, he went to what was then called ACCM (the Advisory Council for the Church’s Ministry, now the Bishops’ Advisory Panel) and was told to go and do something else before beginning his training. Through the Diocese of Salisbury’s link with the Church in Sudan, he found a placement in Africa.

“I was sent against my will to a culture that couldn’t be more different from Christ Church,” he says. “There was no electricity, no water, nothing but a church full of vibrancy, excitement and danger. It was a rich and colourful experience that was life changing. I wouldn’t have missed it for



Neil Constable, Chief Executive of the Globe, Lord Blair, Lord Bragg and the Rt Revd Humphrey Southern. Photo: Mike Nelson

One of the first events attended by the new Principal was *The Bible and The Bard*, a special gala dinner at the Globe Theatre in London. Those attending the event were treated to a tour of the unique theatre and a conversation between Lord Bragg and Lord Blair on their shared interests in Shakespeare and the Bible.

Ian Blair, the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, is a Trustee of the Globe. (He is also well known in the Diocese of Oxford as a member of the Bishop’s Council.) Before the dinner he interviewed Melvyn Bragg on his love of the language of Shakespeare and the King James Bible. The event was the launch of the new Cuddesdon refurbishment campaign. (See below left.)

anything. Thank God for the Diocese of Salisbury and ACCM and Sudan.”

It was, he says, one of the most formative times of his life. As well as furnishing him with a store of after dinner stories, he learned “something about the Gospel and culture”, he says.

“I was 22 and had never been outside Europe. I arrived in Khartoum and had to climb through a hole in the wall to get my luggage because the conveyer belt was broken. It was a fragile, delightful, completely alien world, quite extraordinary. I began to learn something about hospitality, about being entirely dependent on complete strangers. I couldn’t communicate with home – there were no phones, and letters would take three or four weeks.”

“It was a fragile, delightful, completely alien world...”

Cuddesdon seemed luxurious after Sudan, though he has particularly strong memories of the cold in the parish church. He was ordained in 1986, and served curacies at St Margaret’s Rainham in Kent, a very busy commuter parish (“I took 100 funerals in my deacon’s year”) and St Mary’s, Walton, in inner-city Liverpool. Between the two, he was seconded to a township parish in Harare in Zimbabwe following the unexpected death of the priest there.

This was followed by a first incumbency at Hale in Guildford Diocese, where he was also Diocesan Ecumenical Officer. During this time he met (at a baptism) his wife Emma, a district nurse, and their two daughters were born. Seven years later the family moved to Wiltshire, where he had grown up, and became Rector of Tisbury. To begin with, he had oversight

of seven villages, but by the time he left the benefice encompassed 16 villages, with populations varying from 36 to around 1,500.

From Wiltshire, he was appointed Bishop of Repton. “It’s been interesting being the sole suffragan in a small and quite varied diocese, just one county, and a mix between the comfortable rural idyll of places like Chatsworth but also the ordinary everyday reality of post-industrial, post-mining Derby.

“My role there included a lot of responsibility around vocations and ministry, the formation of the clergy and their learning as curates. There was also quite a lot of seeing in the new ways in which clergy are supported, such as Ministry Development Reviews and Common Tenure, which is a change of culture for the clergy.”

This, he says, brings him a useful perspective on the world the clergy are being trained for. “I don’t come from the theoretical, academic side, so I’m pleased to have such distinguished colleagues, but I think I know what the Church is looking for and wanting.” He says he is excited about the Edward King Chapel, which opened in 2013 after the sisters moved to the College. “It’s not just the Chapel but what it represents – the resource the sisters offer. The decision to do something as powerful and bold as that says something about our seriousness, and what, at our heart of hearts, this place is about. It’s a place that is confident about its purpose, as we wait on God.”

Growth inspires modern facilities

CUDDESDON has seen a period of strong growth and development over the last 10 years. Student numbers are at their maximum, the research centre is thriving and the College is sharing its resources more widely through new courses, guided retreats and lectures. However, the current single student accommodation has changed little since the College was built in 1854.

“In order to remain an outstanding provider of theological education, we now need to upgrade our study bedrooms to offer more comfortable and modern accommodation to our students and visitors,” says Sophie Farrant, Development Director.

The College has therefore begun a project to refurbish two floors of two wings in the original buildings. As a result of the refurbishment – which will take place over the two summers of 2016 and 2017 to minimise disruption – 24 rooms will gain en-suite facilities, an extra study bedroom will be created, and each floor will gain a kitchenette/utility room.

The project will cost almost £1 million, but thanks to an extremely generous donation of £500,000 by an anonymous donor, and further grants and donations, the campaign is in search of the slightly less daunting figure of £390,000.

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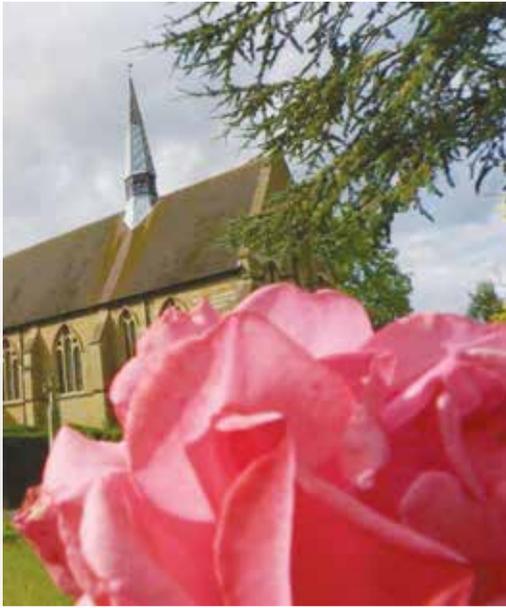
See www.rcc.ac.uk/ for more on the ongoing work at Ripon College, Cuddesdon.

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I highly recommend Exit Darcus. Give it to your teens - give it to anyone struggling with relationships.
Lieutenant T Conway, Salvation Army

Exit Darcus available on Amazon

The annual international Christian Resources Exhibition (CRE) is moving

After 28 years, the annual international Christian Resources Exhibition (CRE), is moving to its new home at the ExCel in London, from 19th - 22nd May,

The event, which regularly attracts over 10,000 visitors, aims to equip, resource and empower the church with the UK's largest resource exhibition.

CRE is much more than an exhibition as there is a daily programme that will enhance your visit including seminars and workshops led by gifted communicators, and the best in Christian music and art. There is no other event that provides so much variety in one place - it is truly an experience not to be missed.

As a visitor at CRE, you can enjoy:

- A unique exhibition of Christian resources with an anticipated 300+ exhibitors.
- An extensive range of books, music and resources to buy.
- The latest multimedia equipment and expert advice.
- Over 100 practical and resourcing seminars.
- Specialist workshops from creative writing to time management
- Authors and performers who will be doing book and music signings
- The best in Christian theatre and music

For a full list of exhibitors and details of seminars, workshops and speakers see www.creonline.co.uk

Here is some visitor feedback from past shows: "My wife and I visited the show together. We were very impressed with the range of exhibitors and the size of the show. Thanks for a great

show - see you next year!"

"It's great to find so many resources together under one roof"

"It was very good to see Christians involved in promoting Christian programmes in various ways to help Churches and other evangelism work for the glory of God."

"Staff were very helpful with my disabled friend who needed a wheelchair when she arrived with me"

"I have been every year since CRE inception and would not miss it. I recommend it to others as a brilliant source of inspiration and information for Christians as we seek to build the kingdom of God in our local communities and the wider world. Keep up the good work!!"

"I was very impressed with the organisation and choice of high quality seminars and challenging speakers"

"Excellent sources of setting up and maintaining churches. Numerous Christian Charities exhibits and their works. Overall it was an excellent display of God's works"

"Only wish I had more time to spend there. I'm sure there must have been things I missed."

"This was our first visit. We were present all day on the 14th May and didn't see everything! We could really have done with spending 2 days with you"

CRE at the ExCel, London, runs from 19th - 22nd May, and is open 10.00am until 5.00pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and 10.00am until 4.30pm Friday. Check out www.creonline.co.uk for more info and updates.



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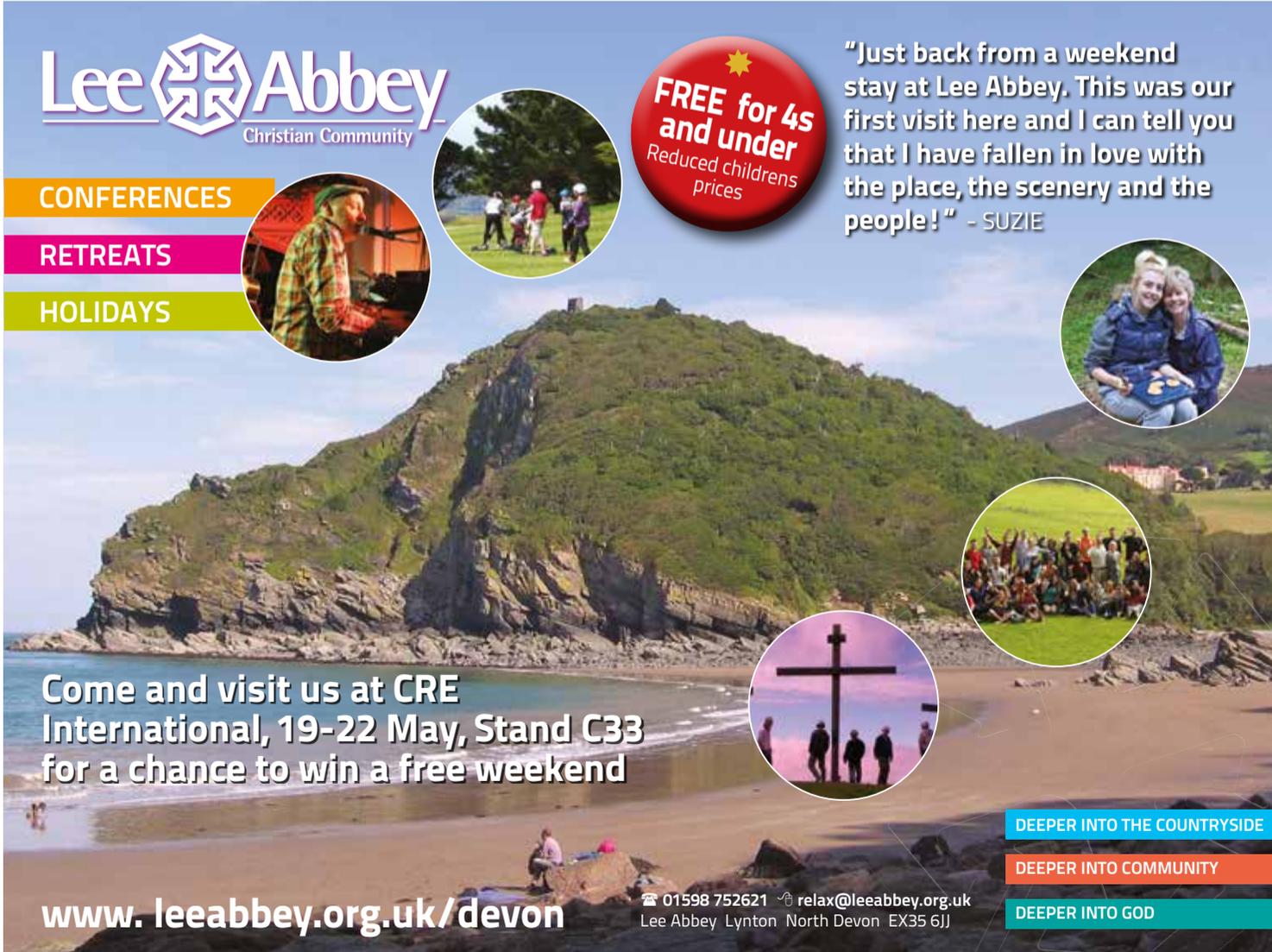
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(Philippians 1:3-6)



By Michael Beasley

St Paul wrote these words to the Church in Philippi almost 2,000 years ago. As I move on from the Diocese of Oxford after a short five years here, I can't think of words that better sum up how I feel on leaving you. I'm enormously grateful that it's been possible for me to walk alongside you in this place. It has been a privilege to work with people from all around our diocese and its many contexts; country villages to city centres, ancient settlements to new areas of housing.

I've been inspired to join with you in the task of sharing the Gospel. Through *Living Faith* you do this in a multitude of different ways that work together for good. I have experienced your worship and prayer from the simplest of gatherings to 2,000 of us raising our voices together at The Grand Day Out.

I've seen you make disciples through outreach events and nurture of faith that grows. I've been humbled to see the ways in which local churches make a difference in the world – from food banks and climate change campaigns to the myriad ways in which individual Christians serve those among whom they live and work.

"I've enjoyed the vibrancy of local Christian communities as churches around the diocese join together..."

I've enjoyed the vibrancy of local Christian communities as churches around the diocese join together to laugh with those who are celebrating and mourn with those who mourn. I've relished the chance to work alongside the many people, lay and ordained, who work in leadership across this diocese – particular highlights being last year's "Imagining Faith" conferences that helped us grow together in confidence, unity and appreciation of each other.

I've learnt so much from you all, and look forward to taking with me to the Diocese of St Albans all the experience, insights and understanding that I've gained from being here.

Among the things I've loved most about the Diocese of Oxford is that it is a place where God's life continually springs up, quite of itself, in a host of ways, amongst a whole variety of people, in an array of different places. Our job is to keep on the alert to see what God is doing, and then to join in. Some people say that is what mission is all about. I pray that you will continue in that good work, faithful that at the last, in Christ, it will be completed. I give thanks for that and for you.

The Revd Dr Michael Beasley is moving on from being the Director of Mission for the Oxford Diocese to become the Bishop of Hertford.

Letters to the editor are very welcome and should be sent either by email to jo.duckles@oxford.anglican.org or by post to Letters at the Door, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey, Oxford OX2 0NB. The Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions. Letters sent electronically will be more likely to be published. Letters should be no more than 300 words.

Dementia Awareness

We wish to thank the Diocese of Oxford for appointing and supporting the work of The Revd Dr Joanna Collicutt as SCOP Adviser. Our parish recently hosted a Dementia Awareness Session at which Joanna unravelled many of the mysteries of dementia with humour and great skill.

Without recourse to unnecessary medical jargon, she was able to offer a very mixed lay audience an insight

into the physical changes of dementia and how these affect people, in the process removing much of what frightens many of us. Alongside theological pathways for the Spiritual Care for Older People, she offered clear practical guide-lines which could be easily adopted by any congregation.

Thank you very much, Joanna!

Diana Hasting, Acting PCC Secretary for All Saints' Sutton Courtenay

Obituary: Lady Penelope Nairne, Lay Reader and trainer, President of Oxford Home-Start and campaigner for the ordination of women

PENNY Nairne (right) died in December, aged 87. Penny had lived in Oxfordshire since 1981 and was also the founder

of Oxford Home-Start. The Acting Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, described Penny as "a person of deep and thoughtful faith, committed to her Lord, passionate about the life of the Church in all its diversity."

She was the wife of Sir Patrick Nairne, was the Master of St Catherine's College, Oxford, from 1981 to 1988 and who died in June 2013. She was involved with the WRVS, worked for St Michael's Church, New Marston and was on the Chair of the Advisory Council of BBC Radio Oxford, among many other roles and responsibilities. She is survived by her children Kathy, Fiona, Sandy, James, Andrew and Margaret, her sister Johanna and 12 grandchildren. **For a full obituary see www.oxford.anglican.org/pennynairne.**



Generosity abounds

Reading about Amersham's generous decision to help Burnham and Slough meet their deanery share, I am reminded that in 1996 Wendover and Sonning deaneries, and Beaconsfield PCC were similarly generous in assisting Milton Keynes Deanery.

This ensured that we were able to claim the rebate for prompt payment in the first year of that arrangement and assisted us to pay our share in full for several years. Milton Keynes gave each of the lay chairmen concerned a 'concrete cow' to thank them.

Penny Keens (Former Milton Keynes Lay Chair of the Deanery)

A big thank you for the article

Just to say a big thank you for the excellent article you wrote about Discovering Prayer. (*the Door*, March 2015) It trebled the audience and has been very helpful indeed. As a result I've been asked to write an article for the *Oxford Mail* and and been offered the sport of @ourchurchofengland, tweeting about my day-to-day.

Michelle Eyre, Oxford. www.discoveringprayer.com

Competition winners

Congratulations to the winners of our competition in the April issue of *the Door* - Charles Graham from Oxford, Julia Morgan from Slough and Mrs Soley from Tilehurst have all won a copy of *I Think It's God Calling* by Katy Magdalene Price.

God in the life of...

Continued from page 16

"God is not creating the suffering but is alongside to help us handle it.

"It's also easy to understand why God whose nature is love should experience that creation at first hand in the form of Jesus Christ, and why the essence of our faith is to open the sluice gates of our hearts and let it flow through us into everyone we meet."

Gavin's altruism and Christian values shape the vision for his company and inspire his work. In 1987 he wrote a paper he sent to the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, on rebalancing wealth. He suggested inheritance tax should be used to fuel the aspirations of disadvantaged young people and called for inter-generational rebalancing within the economy.

In 2014 Gavin gave up his role as Chief Executive of The Share Centre and is now its chair. With his newly released time, the entrepreneur set up Share Radio – a digital radio station that is now going from strength to strength.

"That's what I've been up to for the last year. I secured premises in Chapel Street, London, above Premier Christian Radio," says Gavin. After enlisting the help of BBC-experienced radio experts and recruiting 25 staff to run the station, broadcasting began in late 2014.

"It's early days and it will take a year or two to cover

costs," says Gavin. "We've signed an agreement with the Open University to broadcast their *Managing My Money* course, a very accessible eight week course which helps people to be more confident with handling money."

The station aims to provide information about the financial world in an accessible, entertaining way. It's not specifically a Christian station, but Gavin's values, which underpin The Share Centre and The Share Foundation, are at its heart.

Gavin worships at St Leonard's near Wendover. He lives there with his wife Virginia and continues to serve on the Aylesbury Deanery Synod, Oxford Diocesan Synod and General Synod.

On the website

For more on Gavin's work see:
www.share.com
www.sharefound.org
www.shareradio.co.uk
www.how2help.net

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Audio version

Sight impaired people can get a free audio version of the Door by contacting the Oxford Diocese on 01865 208227.

16 God in the life of...

FINANCIAL expert Gavin Oldham believes strongly in empowering people to reach their full potential. He tells Jo Duckles about his journey from his early days on the shop floor of an aircraft engineering firm to becoming a successful entrepreneur and serving on Deanery, Diocesan and General Synods.

With a grandfather and father who worked in the City, Gavin grew up not only in a Christian family, but one that taught him about the importance of savings and investments. In his teens working on the shop floor of British Aircraft Corporation in the late 1960s, he had his first experience of colleagues who were reliant on this week's wages to pay the next week's expenses. Generally this is a situation that has not changed, with 51 per cent of the UK population struggling with the cost of living.

"My reaction was to think that there must be a way of making it easier for people to find economic freedom," says Gavin. While the economic downturn of recent years has led to a general mistrust of those working in finance, Gavin seems to buck the trend, displaying an altruistic nature that began to develop in his 20s. He established Nansen International Children's Centre, an Oxford-based charity then, which took children from deprived backgrounds on holidays in its double decker bus.

When we met at the Aylesbury base of The Share Centre, the company Gavin founded in the early 1990s, we shared a coffee and he gave me a tour of the building. Upstairs is The Share Foundation, which runs the Government's Junior ISA scheme, putting money into trust funds for young people in care. Almost all UK local authorities have signed up, and Gavin is implementing a scheme to ensure the youngsters who receive the



Gavin at work at his offices. Photo: The Share Centre

Junior ISAs have the opportunity to do basic literacy and numeracy courses and the Open University's *Managing my Money* course.

"It's about breaking the cycle of deprivation and giving young people the chance to find and achieve their potential," says Gavin, who relishes the challenge of running large scale ventures that can benefit thousands of people at once.

"There is a clear link between ownership and responsibility..."

In his early 20s as Gavin's awareness of social deprivation was growing, he was inspired by the book *Wind, Sand and Stars* by Antoine de Ste-Exupéry. He was particularly struck by the epilogue, which tells of a peasant family with a child who could potentially go on to do anything but, due to the poverty into which he had been

born, was most likely to end up following in his parents' footsteps and living as a peasant.

Gavin saw parallels in British society. "I was aware that when people own their own homes they take more responsibility for them. There is a clear link between ownership and responsibility which extends into all aspects of everyday life."

After an unpromising start as an engineer, Gavin moved into Wedd Durlacher Mordaunt, a stock jobbing firm set up by his great-grandfather. "I hadn't intended to go into the City: however it gave me an excellent background. Wedds handled 40 per cent of London Stock Exchange turnover," says Gavin. When Barclays acquired the business in 1986 Gavin set up Barclayshare, which is now Barclays Stockbrokers. "It was a fantastic learning curve," he says, "and all part of bringing the opportunity to own part of - and be part responsible for - businesses to people from all walks of life."

In 1990 he left to set up his own

company, The Share Centre. Working long days all week for four to five years left Gavin in need of a break, and in 1995 he joined his wife at the Oxford Diocese's conference in Bognor Regis for some much needed inspiration. Until now, despite a Christian upbringing, faith hadn't figured massively in Gavin's life.

"The conference was such a tremendous experience that I felt not only at home but that this was something that added a tremendous amount to my understanding of life. I decided I'd like to do a bit more for the Church," he says. Gavin joined his Deanery Synod that year and canvassed for election to General Synod. He was a Church Commissioner from 1998 to 2013, and set up the Church of England's Community Action website www.how2help.net in 2012.

"...gravity, light and time - are all framed in the image of that love."

Previously Gavin had wrestled with Christianity on a personal level to reconcile the existence of good and evil with a loving God. "A God who is playing games watching us struggle is not a God I understand at all," says Gavin. "The more I listened and read the more I understood. I found that piece in St John's first epistle that 'God is Love', and started thinking about the true meaning for creation. If the nature of the conscious creator is unconditional love, it explains why the great laws that enabled creation to take place - gravity, light and time - are all framed in the image of that love.

"St Paul talks of the groaning of creation. He speaks of continuing creation, order being constructed against chaos and darkness. At the frontier between order and chaos is where bad things happen not only in human terms but in natural ones, such as tsunamis and earthquakes.

Continued on page 15.

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Pull this section out. Keep it handy for your own prayers and involvement in the Diocese.

Graceful giving

The Revd Andrew Lightbown on the theology of giving.

It has been said there are two types of people who worry about money: those who haven't got enough and those with too much. Before I reflect on the importance of *graceful giving* it is important to acknowledge that we have a problem with money.

Our relationship with money is dysfunctional, in the sense that both our attachment to it, if we are fortunate to possess a surfeit of the stuff, and our desire to obtain it, if we aren't able to meet our material needs (real or assumed) can lead to selfish patterns of behaviour; patterns which, left unchecked, diminish both our humanity and the common good.

Two of the 1970's biggest bands were aware of the problems money presents us with. Abba wrote that:

*I work all night, I work all day, to pay the bills I have to pay
Ain't it sad
And still there never seems to be a single penny left for me
That's too bad*

*All the things I could do
If I had a little money
It's a rich man's world.*

I suspect that many congregations would sympathise with Abba's slant. It is hard work keeping the show on the road and the building in an adequate state. How dare those rich and wealthy churches talk to us about mission, when there is simply



nothing left in the kitty? The trouble with such sentiments is that they embitter and diminish us.

Pink Floyd also famously wrote about money. Placing themselves in the shoes of the wealthy they wrote:

I'm all right jack keep your hands off my stack ... share it fairly but don't take a slice of my pie.

Could it be that there are churches who believe that they 'give' an excessive amount in parish share and therefore their

standing orders and cheques are forwarded with feelings of resentment? Of course if this is the case then they really aren't 'giving' in any serious theological sense. Gospel giving must always be graceful, loving, and excessive.

Fortunately Scripture provides the answer to our dysfunctional relationship with money. In 1 Chronicles 29, 14 we are reminded that:

"All things come from you, and of your own have we given you."

We might be tempted to believe that we are the originators of all that we own, but Scripture suggests this is not true. All things come from God and we should all – 'poor' and 'rich' alike – expect to be judged on our use of things, including money. St Paul understood this, so should we:

"We want you to know, brothers and sisters about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints—and this, not merely as we expected."
2 Corinthians 8, 1-5.

In praising the impoverished Macedonians Paul lays down a significant and timeless challenge to the wealthy: up your game and do it with excessive grace, regarding giving as privilege, rather than duty.

Let's also be reassured by St. Paul's observation that graceful giving leads to growth in the 'ministry of the saints' which becomes 'abundant joy.'

All churches are called on to be Macedonians, contributing up to and beyond our means, as an expression of God's inherent generosity and grace. Let's all, therefore, up our game!

The Revd Andrew Lightbown is a Curate in the Schorne Benefice and the Editor of Theonomics: Reconnecting Economics with Virtue and Integrity.

En route to ordination

Ordinand Hannah Cartwright remembers what felt like the most terrifying job interview of her life.

"There are different kinds of service but the same Lord." 1 Corinthians 12:5

It is almost exactly a year since I attended BAP (*Bishops' Advisory Panel*) and, with the exception of my wedding day, never has such a short period of time resulted in such a big life-change. In the space of just three short days, I went from an office job in the charity sector to being an 'Ordinand' who would shortly begin training for priesthood.

There was no more hiding away from my sense of calling or pretending it was all just a fanciful idea. Now the Church had formally recognised, tested and affirmed that they also believed God had called me

to become a priest in his Church. This was a simultaneously terrifying, humbling and amazing thought, and one which still keeps me awake at night.

"God calls us all into diverse and equally important ministries..."

I'd love to say that my vocational wrestlings had been akin to Mary, joyfully responding with awe and a resoundingly unhesitant 'yes', when she found out that God had called her to bear Christ. However, if I'm honest, I had been a bit more of a Jeremiah character; coming up with some very good reasons why I wouldn't be up to the job, and only reluctantly giving in when God made it unequivocally clear I wasn't going to wriggle out of it. So I arrived at BAP after three years in the discernment process, endless meetings and having

filled in reams of paperwork about every imaginable aspect of my life and faith.

It now all rested on three interviews with senior clergy and lay people from across the national Church, a few group exercises and my written response to a tricky pastoral situation. It felt a little like the most intense job interview of my life, and we were under observation from the moment we walked through the door to the moment that we left. All I could do was to keep praying and to remind myself frequently of the piece of advice given to me by everyone supporting me back home: 'just be you'. I wasn't there to convince anyone that I should be a priest and I was acutely aware that I wasn't up to the job in my own strength, I was there simply to offer myself for ministry.

Thankfully though, BAP advisers are not looking for another Messiah, they're looking for real people with the marks of one called to join in God's continuing mission in the particular role of an ordained priest, and with the potential to

minister, and lead others in ministering, God's love to his people through the person of Jesus Christ.

Like Mary, we are all called to bear Christ to one another, but as with Jeremiah we often have some very convincing reasons why we would not be the ideal candidate. None of us are perfect, but God calls us all into diverse and equally important ministries, and promises to equip us for the particular ministry to which he has called us. Some are called to be priests; some to be street pastors, flower arrangers, musicians, lay ministers, food bank volunteers...the list goes on. There is no hierarchy of calling, only the honour of serving God and his people in the unique way God has called you to. BAP confirmed that my particular calling was to the ordained priesthood, but first I had to offer myself for ministry in his Church and trust him to equip me for what lay ahead.

Hannah Cartwright is currently training for ordination at Ripon College, Cuddesdon.



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May prayer diary

The following is for guidance only, please feel free to adapt to local conditions

Our purpose is to create a caring, sustainable and growing Christian presence in every part of the Diocese of Oxford.

'Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.'
1 Peter 4:10

Pray to the Father through the Son in the power of the Spirit for:

FRIDAY 1 Reading Deanery. Stephen Pullin, Peter Jeal, Joan Walker, Mark Burton, Roger Williams, Kenneth Dyson and Anna Knaggs. For the strengthening of relationships within and across the deanery and for a productive consensus amongst deanery synod as we consult on our shared aspirations for the church of the future, and for discovering how the deanery can best support this aspiration. Bishop John Went confirming at Bradfield College.

SATURDAY 2 St Andrew's. Caversham. Nigel Jones. Please pray for the new monthly baby and children's clothing, toys and wheels sale, run by some mums and the Mothers' Union and the new Heights Primary School.

MONDAY 4 Bank Holiday. Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham. Mike Smith, Jeremy Tear, Rachel Ross-Smith and Philip Blackburn. For St Peter's, St John's and St Margaret's as we embark upon the Partnership for Missional Church pilot and begin to discern what God is asking of us in our community. For our work to grow and develop new ministries among all our members.

TUESDAY 5 St Nicolas Earley. Neil Warwick, Libby Newman and Emma Major. For wisdom and openness as we develop our church and site to become a hub for our community; for all leaders at St Nicolas, both ordained and lay, and for Ben as he comes to join us as our curate.

WEDNESDAY 6 St Peter Earley. For parishioners as they are nearing the end of the vacancy and give thanks for the ministry of the Reverends Colin Bass and Richard Allen who have supported the parish during the vacancy. St Peter Earley (VA) School.

THURSDAY 7 Trinity (LEP) Earley. Jonathan Salmon and Anne Paine.

FRIDAY 8 Emmer Green St Barnabas with Caversham Park.



Derek Chandler, Elizabeth Gash, Heather Wilson and Paula Andrews. For the 'Partnership for Missional Church' discussions in the benefice and the possible appointment of a Baptist Pioneer Minister for Caversham Park LEP.

SATURDAY 9 Loddon Reach. Paul Willis, Chris Leslie, Cath Spence and Michael Dexter-Elisha. Please pray particularly for Paul Willis who was licensed on the 5 May, and for the eventual completion of the team. Please also pray for the four parishes (Beech Hill, Shinfield, Spencers Wood and Grazeley and Swallowfield) as they welcome Paul and that we will develop an exciting and vibrant ministry over the coming months. Grazeley (VA) St Mary's Shinfield (VA) Schools.

MONDAY 11 Christ Church Reading. Peter Day, Peter Smith, and Joan van Emden. For the continued spiritual growth and exploration of faith among the congregation and for inspiration and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our deliberations about future expansion and outreach to the wider community. New Christ Church Aided School. Diocesan Advisory Committee. The Crown Nominations Commission meets to discern who will be the next Bishop of Oxford.

TUESDAY 12 Greyfriars Reading (with New Hope Community Church). Joy Atkins, Dan Heyward, Philip Giddings, Sue Wilmot, Christine Ledger, John Ledger, Dennis Parker, Fiona Pollard and Heather Lewis. For discernment as we seek to appoint a new vicar, with interviews at the end of May, and for favour as we seek to share God's good news in the parish through New Hope Community Church, and in the town through various ministries, including increased responsibility for nurseries in the area. Please continue to pray for the Crown Nominations Commission as they deliberate on who God might be calling to be the next Bishop of Oxford.

WEDNESDAY 13 Holy Trinity Reading. Bob Simmonds. Please pray for priest and parish as, following an unsettling and uncertain past, we begin

a new era in the life of Holy Trinity. Please pray that we might see Holy Trinity becoming a focal point for the local community. Please also give thanks for those, ordained and lay, who have faithfully maintained ministry and mission during the vacancy.

THURSDAY 14 Ascension Day. St Agnes with St Paul and St Barnabas Reading. Vernon Orr, Leon Collyer, Penny Cuthbert and Christine Orme. For the fulfilment of our parish Apostolic Strategic Plan and a revival that will turn the people's hearts back to God and transform businesses and institutions. Bishop Andrew confirming at Wokingham All Saints and St Pauls. Michael Beasley who will be consecrated Bishop in preparation for taking up his post as Bishop of Hertford.

FRIDAY 15 St Giles Reading. David Harris, Sam McNally-Cross. For our work in local schools, and the expansion of one into a new primary school, and for our study groups that meet weekly and monthly.

SATURDAY 16 St John the Evangelist Reading. Vincent Gardner, Hamish Bruce, Richard Croft, Jeremy Thake and Don Mason. St John's (VA) School.

MONDAY 18 St Mary the Virgin Reading. Stephen Pullin. For safe and constructive engagement with people in Reading town centre on Saturday nights (St Mary's is now open from 10pm until 2am) and for discernment on how to best respond to increasing daytime visitors.

TUESDAY 19 St Laurence Reading. Chris Russell, David Pickersgill and Christopher West. For the 150+ young people we have contact with each week, that the Spirit would pick them up and turn them around. Pray that we would have imagination and courage as we work to see their transition into the confessional life of the church and many would come to faith in Jesus. Pray for all of the church community that all would contribute all their gifts to all that God calls us to.

Services at Christ Church Cathedral

SUNDAYS: 8am Holy Communion; 10am Matins (coffee in Priory Room); 11.15am Sung Eucharist; 6pm Evensong.

WEEKDAYS: 7.15am Morning Prayer; 7.35am Holy Communion; 1pm (Wednesday only) Holy Communion; 6pm Evensong (Thursday Sung Eucharist 6pm).

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ions and, if you wish, produce your own deanery prayer diaries.

WEDNESDAY 20 St Luke with St Bartholomew. Graeme Fancourt, Richard Christopher and Christine Blackman. For wisdom and energy as we seek to fulfil our vision in 'creating space for life' and guidance for the Garden Cooperative planning group, seeking to turn the hall garden into a community allotment for local people in poverty. Bishop's Council.

THURSDAY 21 St Mark and All Saints Reading. Nicholas Cheeseman, Diana Matthews and Sylvia Cummins. Please pray that we might symbolise that the Church's ministry is Christ's own; entrusted to his Church and its saints. All Saints (VA) and St Mary and All Saints (VA) Schools.

FRIDAY 22 St Matthew Reading. Pads Dolphin, Carol Morgan and Andrew McNeill. Please pray that our youth would flourish in the hands of our new volunteer Youth Pastor, Chris Everett, and that our Mission Action Planning initiative would bring change and new growth in 2015.

SATURDAY 23 St Catherine Tilehurst and St Birinus Calcot. Denis Smith, Tony Bartlett and Michael Heather. Please pray for the Development Project and the Pastoral Care Plan.

MONDAY 25 Bank Holiday. Tilehurst St George and St Mary Magdalen. Adam Carlill and June Hardcastle. For the successful conclusion of our hall project so that St George's can serve the local community better and for St Mary Magdalen - Please pray for inspiration as we get used to our new chairs, following the removal of the pews in April, and find new ways of worshipping together.

TUESDAY 26 St Michael Tilehurst. John Rogers, Jennifer Foakes, Alan Rutter and Don Wark.

WEDNESDAY 27 St James Southlake (Woodley Group Ministry). Nick Jackson, Jane Lewis, David Fulford, Michael Patterson and Ian Mullens. For fundraising to replace the leaking roof, specifically for a grant application to be successful and for

Prayer for the Bishop of Oxford vacancy

*Gracious Lord and shepherd of your pilgrim Church,
We bless you and praise you that you have gathered us,
from across this Diocese,
to be one flock, within one fold.*

*By your Spirit,
Give us wisdom, courage and faith
as we seek a faithful pastor who will sustain us on the journey,
feed us with word and sacrament
and nurture our 'Living Faith',
inspiring us to follow you ever more closely.*

*This we ask in the name of Jesus,
our loving, faithful shepherd
who is the beginning
and the end of all that we are
and seek and do.*

Amen.

our search to appoint a new Youth Worker for ourselves and Emmanuel, Woodley.

THURSDAY 28 Woodley Emmanuel Conventional District. Sean Riordan and Susan Walters.

FRIDAY 29 Woodley St John the Evangelist (Woodley Group Ministry). Eddie Marquez. For our growing Children's/Youth Club as we look for a part-time worker and also for the new young families coming to St John's, and the plans to make the church more welcoming to babies and toddlers, and in the long term multifunctional. Woodley (VC) School.



SATURDAY 30 Henley Deanery. Kevin Davies, Heather Llewellyn, Wendy Ferguson, Brian Turner, Stephen Cousins, Peter Dewey and Ian Thacker.

Correction

Last month *the Door* incorrectly recorded that the Ven Stephen Mark Buckingham Rowe, who used to work in this diocese but is now based in Canada, had died. This was incorrect and he is alive and well. We apologise for any upset caused.

Coming and Goings

The Revd Sarah Mellor will take up post as Associate Minister in the Ray Valley Benefice; **Bishop Humphrey Southern** will become an Honorary Assistant Bishop in the diocese; **The Revd Paul Willis** will take up post as Team Vicar at Lodden Reach; **The Revd Canon Linda Green** will be leaving her post as Associate Area Dean of Deddington; **The Revd Hilary Campbell** will take up additional post as Associate Area Dean of Deddington; **The Revd Diana Glover** will retire from post as Vicar at

Amersham on the Hill; **The Revd Bob Edy** will leaving his post as Rector of Ducklington with Hardwick; **The Revd Tess Ward** has left her post as Chaplain of Katharine House Hospice.

The following have been given Permission to Officate: **The Revd Rupert Shelley;** **The Revd Tess Ward.**

We recall with sadness the deaths of: **The Revd Norman Greenfield;** **The Revd William Pugh;** **Canon Stanley Hamilton Rowe** and **The Revd Mary Parsons.**

confirming at Shiplake College and at the Akeman Benefice. Bishop John Went confirming in Amersham.

SUNDAY 24 Pentecost. Please pray for an abundant pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the Church around the world. Pray for Christians who risk their very lives to worship and proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SUNDAY 31 Trinity Sunday. Bishop David Jennings confirming at All Saints Highfield. Please pray for the Church around the world as we celebrate the mystery of our Trinitarian faith. Pray for preachers as they seek to draw people into that mystery.

A short guide to special Sundays and other events (with a global focus) from Christian Concern for One World that you may wish to pray for in 2015 is available at www.tinyurl.com/pobjgmh

Our Bishops on Sundays

SUNDAY 3 Bishop Colin confirming at Ewelme. Bishop Andrew confirming in Newbury Deanery and Finchampstead and California.

SUNDAY 10 Rogation Sunday. Christian Aid Week begins. Bishop David Jennings confirming at St Nicholas Marston. Bishop Colin confirming at Kingham Hill School and Banbury. Bishop Henry Scriven confirming at Bloxham School. Bishop Andrew confirming at Pangbourne College and Bishop Alan confirming at Aylesbury.

SUNDAY 17 Bishop Andrew confirming at the Downe House School and at Greyfriars Reading. Bishop Alan confirming at Stowe School and at Milton Keynes LEP. Bishop Colin

Hospital of St Cross & Almshouse of Noble Poverty "England's Oldest Almshouse" Vacancies for Brothers

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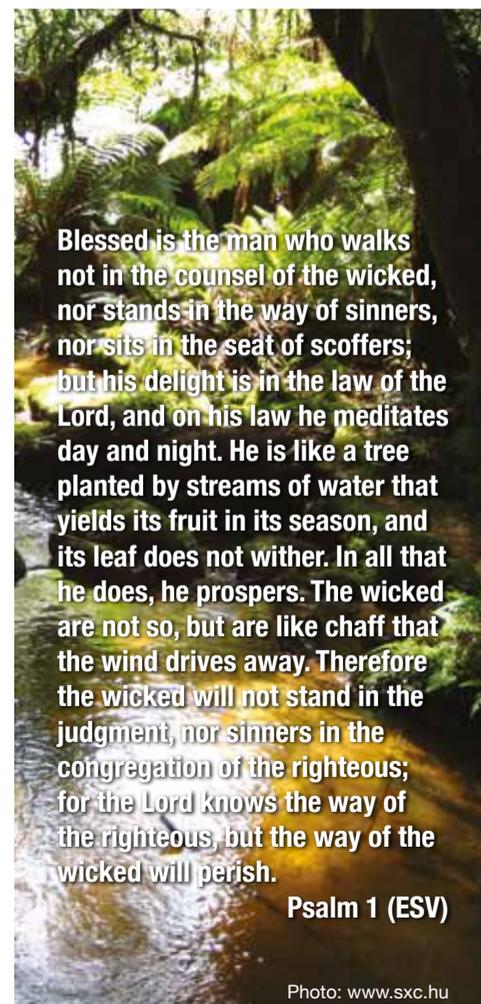


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Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Psalm 1 (ESV)

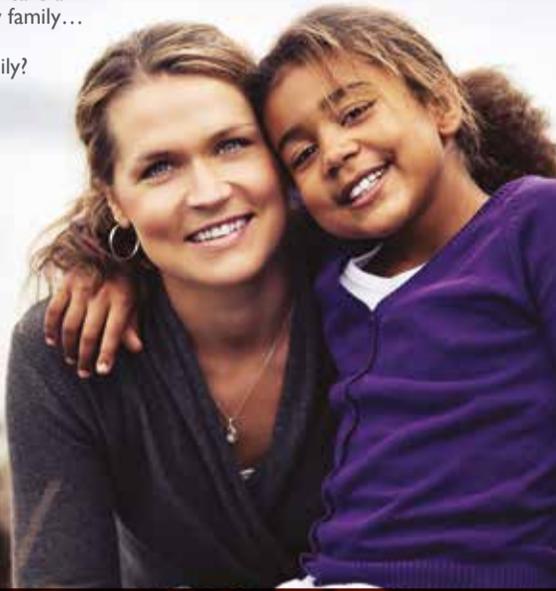
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Adoption information evenings: **First Wednesday of every month 6.30pm-8.00pm**

Venue: SFCS, Collis House, 48 Newport Road, Woolstone, Milton Keynes, MK15 0AA

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Courses, training, conferences and workshops in May

The Doorpost is a free service for churches to advertise their events and is designed to be hung on church noticeboards. Please send your events to doorpost@oxford.anglican.org or by post to Church House. The deadline for the next issue is **Friday 1 May**.

FRIDAY 1 MAY

Dorchester-on-Thames: The 2015 Festival begins today until 10 May and will take place at Dorchester Abbey. See www.dorchesterfestival.com for full programme of events.

SATURDAY 2 MAY

Chesham: Art Exhibition today and tomorrow from 11am - 5pm at Christ Church, Waterside. Theme is 'Celebration'. Free entry and parking. Email art.at.christchurch@gmail.com for details.

SUNDAY 3 MAY

Oxford: Christ Church Cathedral Easter carol service for Eastertide at 6pm. Email cathedral@chch.ox.ac.uk or phone 01865 276155 for details.

Oxford: 'Love Oxford' event from 11am - 12.45pm in Broad Street, Oxford. See www.loveoxford.org

WEDNESDAY 6 MAY

Oxford: 'The Recollection Series' begins at Pusey House OX1 3LZ at 2pm. An introduction to some of the key periods, characters and ideas of Christian history. Also on 20 May, 3 June and 17 June at 2pm. See www.puseyhouse.org.uk

THURSDAY 7 MAY

Oxford: Open discussion at Oxford Brookes University, Harcourt Hill OX2 9AT at 5.30pm - 'Why men like straight lines and women like polka dots?' with Prof Gloria Moss, Professor of Management and Marketing at Buckinghamshire New University. All welcome. Free entry. Email 12063375@brookes.ac.uk

SATURDAY 9 MAY

Wingrave: Plant sale at the parish church at 10am. Refreshments available.

Freeland: Drop-in quiet day at the Old Parsonage from 10am - 4pm.

No booking needed just turn up (bring your own food).

SUNDAY 10 MAY:

Hambleton: Church of St Mary the Virgin. Concert by Lyra, a vocal quartet from St Petersburg. To include Orthodox church music, operatic arias and Russian folk songs. Tickets £12.50 at the door.

WEDNESDAY 13 MAY

Oxford: The Oxford Council for Christians and Jews annual Richard Harries Lecture talk will take place at 7.30pm in the Blue Boar Theatre at Christ Church Cathedral (drinks from 7pm). Edward Stourton of the BBC will speak of his book 'Cruel Crossing: escaping Hitler across the Pyrenees'. Email oxfordccj@gmail.com for details.

SATURDAY 16 MAY

Chalgrove: Ohio University Choral Scholars performance at St Mary's Church OX44 7SD at 7.30pm. Suggested donation £5. Phone 01865 400402 or email cb@charlesbaker.org for details.

Bicester: St Edburg's Foundation coach trip to St Albans Cathedral. Depart from Littlebury Hotel at 9am. Guided visit plus free time. Depart St Albans at 4pm. £15 for Foundation members; £20 for non-members. Phone 01869 325581 for details and booking form.

Windsor: A performance of 'Brendan the Navigator: A call to risky living' (a choral song cycle with dance and music) will take place at St John the Baptist church at 2pm.

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SUNDAY 17 MAY

Dunsden: Launch of the Wilfred Owen Smartphone Trail will take place today at 12pm at Eye and Dunsden Village Hall RG4 9QG and Green. See www.owenindunsden.org for details.

WEDNESDAY 20 MAY

Wokingham: Talk by John Bell 'Sexuality and the Church: is gayness a gift, rather than an issue?' Begins at 7.30pm at All Saints Church RG40 1UE. £3 donation; students/unemployed free. Email peter.barrett500@gmail.com.

THURSDAY 21 MAY

Aldworth: St Mary's Church is 700 years old this year. Come and find out how 14th Century people saw the world when St Mary's was founded. Begins at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church RG8 9SB. Tickets £10. Phone 01635 578936 or 01491 671714.

Oxford: The Centre for Enterprise, Markets and Ethics talk on 'Quaker Capitalism: lessons for today - why were the Quakers successful in business?' will take place at Said Business School OX1 1HP from 6pm - 9pm. Drinks and light supper. RSVP by 12 May by emailing office@theceme.org or phone 01865 513453.

SATURDAY 23 MAY

Witney: The combined choirs of the Lower Windrush Choral Society and L'Ensemble Vocal Montclair will present *Choral Classics* at 6pm in St Mary's Church. A chance to hear the new organ at St Mary's. Tickets £10 on the door or from St Andrew's Bookshop, High Street, Witney. Phone 01993 773283.

Oxford: Rainbow Run for Helen and Douglas House will take place at Cutteslowe Park at 11am. Details at www.helenanddouglas.org.uk

SUNDAY 31 MAY

Steventon: St Michael and All Angels OX13 6SW at 7pm. A Celebration Concert by the church choir to celebrate the worship of God in or through music. Phone 01235 831395 for details.

Courses and Special Events

Celebrating 21 years of Li Tim-Oi Foundation:

This event will take place on 2 May in Southwark Cathedral. Preacher: Bishop Libby Lane and reception with Dr Elaine Storkey. 11am Eucharist, followed by ticketed reception. See <https://eventbrite.co.uk/event/16201478057> to book your place.

Handling Conflict: Training days for incumbents and those in licensed ministry to increase your confidence and capability to work positively and more effectively with conflict. **Day 1 - Improving the quality of meetings, particularly difficult PCCs** (6 May in Cold Ash; 12 May in Clanfield and 11 June in High Wycombe). **Day 2 - Handling interpersonal/one to one conflict** (1 June in Cold Ash; 23 June in Clanfield and 25 June in High Wycombe). Cost £10 for each day which includes a resource pack and lunch. Email sheila.townsend@oxford.anglican.org or phone 01865 208277 for details and booking form.

Vocations in Bucks event: 13 May 8pm - 9.30pm at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Aylesbury HP21 8NH. 'This is the Faith of the Church. Confidence in Christ in a Pluralist World.' Speaker: The Rt Revd Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham. Booking information and further details at <http://tinyurl.com/n6vqrch>

Summer Lecture Series at St Mary and All Saints Church, Beaconsfield:

'Living by the Book - Christian Ethics and Modern Dilemmas' lecture series take place at 8pm on 22 April (with Revd Dr Sam Wells); 13 May (with Revd Jim Linthicum); 27 May (with Prof Henry Hutchinson); 10 June (with Lord Harries of Pentregarth) and 24 June (with Ruth Valerio). Cost £5 per lecture. Phone 01494 676690 or email office@stmarysbeaconsfield.org.uk for details and tickets.

Buildings for Mission? 27 May at Ripon College, Cuddesdon: A day of vision and practical training for clergy, lay leaders, DAC members, church architects, conservation officers. Cost £10. Email candc@york.ac.uk or phone 01904 328095 for details.

Local Discipleship and Ministry Courses:

Introduction to the Church of England - One day course on 9 May at Diocesan Church House (cost £20). **Planning and Leading All Age Worship** - Part 1 of this two part course takes place on 9 May at St John's Church, Kidlington (cost £20). **Healing Ministry** - One day course on 16 May at Diocesan Church House (cost £20). For details of these courses please see www.oxford.anglican.org/our-faith/lifelong-learning/ or phone 01865 208257.

BE SEEN

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